

INSPECTION REPORT

Abbey C of E (VC) Infant School
Nuneaton

LEA area: Warwickshire

Unique Reference Number: 125654

Headteacher: Mrs Cheryl Harrold

Reporting inspector: Mrs Margaret Riley

Dates of inspection: 27 – 30 September 1999

Under OFSTED contract number: 707854

Inspection carried out under Section 10 of the School Inspections Act 1996

© Crown Copyright 1999

This report may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that all extracts quoted are reproduced verbatim without adaptation and on condition that the source and date thereof are stated. Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school.

Under the School Inspections Act 1996, the appropriate authority must provide a copy of this report and/or its summary free of charge to certain categories of people. Every registered parent of a registered pupil at the school should receive a free copy of the summary of the report within ten working days of receipt of the summary by the appropriate authority. A charge not exceeding the cost of supply may be made by the appropriate authority for any other copies of the report and/or its summary provided to any person who asks for one.

The appropriate authority should make a copy of the report and the summary available for inspection by members of the public at such times and at such a place as may be reasonable

Any enquiries about this legislation should be addressed to the OFSTED Compliance Helpline

Tel. 0171421 6567

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant
Type of control:	Voluntary Controlled
Age range of pupils:	4 to 7
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Aston Road Abbey Green Nuneaton Warwicks CV11 5EL
Telephone number:	01203 386101
Appropriate authority:	Warwickshire
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs Betty Hudson
Date of previous inspection:	March 1996

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members	Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Margaret Riley, RgI	Mathematics, History, Geography	Attainment and progress; Teaching, Leadership and management; Efficiency of the school.
Kevin Greatorex, Lay Inspector		Attitudes, behaviour and personal development; Attendance; Support, guidance and pupils' welfare; Partnership with parents and the community.
Esther Digby	English, Information technology, Music, Religious education, Areas of learning for children under five	Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development; Staffing, accommodation and learning resources.
Gerry Lewendon	Science, Design and technology, Art, Physical education	The curriculum and assessment; Special educational needs; Equality of opportunity.

The inspection contractor was:

NIAS
INSPECTION DIVISION
Cliftonville Centre
Cliftonville Middle School
Cliftonville Road
Northampton NN1 5BW

01604 259876

Any concerns or complaints about the inspection or the report should be raised with the inspection contractor. Complaints which are not satisfactorily resolved by the contractor should be raised with OFSTED by writing to:

The Registrar
The Office for Standards in Education
Alexandra House
33 Kingsway
London WC2B 6SE

REPORT CONTENTS

Paragraph

MAIN FINDINGS

- What the school does well
- Where the school has weaknesses
- How the school has improved since the last inspection
- Standards in subjects
- Quality of teaching
- Other aspects of the school
- The parents' views of the school

KEY ISSUES FOR ACTION

INTRODUCTION

- Characteristics of the school 1 - 6
- Key indicators

PART A: ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Educational standards achieved by pupils at the school

- Attainment and progress 7 -18
- Attitudes, behaviour and personal development 19 -23
- Attendance 24

Quality of education provided

- Teaching 25 -32
- The curriculum and assessment 33 - 40
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development 41 - 45
- Support, guidance and pupils' welfare 46 - 50
- Partnership with parents and the community 51 - 55

The management and efficiency of the school

- Leadership and management 56 - 61
- Staffing, accommodation and learning resources 62 - 64
- The efficiency of the school 65 - 67

PART B: CURRICULUM AREAS AND SUBJECTS

Areas of learning for children under five	68 - 84
English, mathematics and science	85 - 111
Other subjects or courses	112 - 152

PART C: INSPECTION DATA

Summary of inspection evidence	153
Data and indicators	154

MAIN FINDINGS

What the school does well

- Teaching is good in almost half the lessons

- The work of classroom support staff is of good quality

- The school is well managed. The headteacher provides strong and purposeful leadership; she has vision and clear commitment to improving the standards of teaching and learning

- Children have good attitudes to learning, behave very well and are beginning to respond positively to the demands of the literacy and numeracy curriculum

- The school staff builds strong relationships with children, promoting their health, welfare and personal development in a positive atmosphere

- The school provides a good range of extra-curricular activities

- There are good links with the local community and the school's work is highly valued by parents

- The headteacher, staff and governors successfully promote Christian values in the day to day life of the school

Where the school has weaknesses

- I. The standards attained by pupils by the time they are seven years old are below the national average in English and mathematics

- II. The standards and provision for some aspects of information technology are not satisfactory

- III. Too little emphasis is given to the ways in which the assessment and marking of children's work can contribute to their future learning and achievement of realistic targets

- IV. There are weaknesses in the ways in which teachers, curriculum co-ordinators and the governing body monitor and evaluate the quality of teaching, planning and subject development

- V. The current use and deployment of learning and classroom support assistants is not always effective.

The strengths of the school outweigh the weaknesses. The governors' action plan will set out how the weaknesses identified during the inspection are to be tackled. The plan will be sent to all parents or guardians of pupils at the school. This will build on the work already begun by the headteacher and staff.

How the school has improved since the last inspection

Since the last inspection the school has placed greater emphasis on raising standards, particularly in English and mathematics. There has been some improvement in the results achieved in the end of Key Stage 1 National Curriculum tests and tasks. This is especially so in reading and writing, but the school does not yet succeed in getting larger numbers of pupils attaining at higher levels. Appropriate attention has been given to the work in history and music since the last inspection. There has been continued commitment to achieving high standards of pupil behaviour and attendance rates have improved. There has been limited progress towards improving the quality of assessment and marking to inform teacher planning and pupils' learning. The indoor and outdoor accommodation has greatly improved and the addition of a nursery unit has made a good contribution to the overall quality of the school.

Standards in subjects

This table shows the standards achieved by 7 year olds in 1998 based on the National Curriculum tests:

Performance in	Compared with all schools	Compared with similar schools		Key
			<i>well above average</i>	A
			<i>above average</i>	B
English	E	E	<i>Average</i>	C
Mathematics	E	D	<i>below average</i>	D
			<i>well below average</i>	E

The youngest children, in the nursery unit and reception classes, make satisfactory progress in reading, writing and mathematics. By the age of seven pupil’s attainment in English and mathematics is below the level expected nationally as judged by the end of key stage tests. Whilst there has been some improvement during the last two years, the school has not made significant gains in the number of pupils attaining at the higher levels of the tests in comparison to similar schools.

Quality of teaching

Teaching in	Under 5	5 – 7 years
English	Good	Satisfactory
Mathematics	Good	Satisfactory
Science	Good	Satisfactory
Information technology	-----	Satisfactory
Religious education	-----	Satisfactory
Other subjects	-----	Satisfactory

The quality of teaching observed during the inspection was always at least satisfactory. In almost half of lessons it was good. Teaching strengths were observed in all classes. There are particular strengths in the Nursery and in one Year 2 class. The areas for improvement almost always relate to the need to raise teacher expectations of pupil’s potential to achieve targets, increasing the pace of teaching and learning in lessons and ensuring greater clarity in teachers’ planning about what is to be learned. Classrooms are well organised and all teachers have good behaviour management strategies. Classroom support staff are of good quality but are not always appropriately deployed to maximise their effectiveness.

Inspectors make judgements about teaching in the range: excellent; very good; good; satisfactory; unsatisfactory; poor; very poor. ‘Satisfactory’ means that strengths outweigh any weaknesses

Other aspects of the school

Aspect	Comment
Behaviour	Pupils' behaviour is consistently very good. Almost all pupils have positive attitudes to their work and play. Very good relationships are formed in classrooms and playground.
Attendance	This is consistently satisfactory and punctuality is good
Ethos*	The school has a positive atmosphere in which pupils are encouraged to grow and develop, feeling valued by all the adults who work in the school. There is a strong commitment to improving the personal lives and academic standards of all pupils.
Leadership and management	The headteacher provides a strong lead in developing the school, well supported by the deputy headteacher. All staff and governors share her vision but there is still need for further emphasis on analysing standards and the monitoring of teaching and curriculum.
Curriculum	The school offers a broad curriculum and a good range of out of school activities. There are weaknesses in the use of assessment information and marking of pupil's work as a means of informing the planning for teaching and learning.
Pupils with special educational needs	Pupils are well supported by teachers and learning assistants. They make satisfactory progress towards their learning targets.
Spiritual, moral, social & cultural development	This is a strength of the school. Pupils have time to reflect on and consider their own experiences in assemblies and class activities. They understand what is right and wrong and are often thoughtful and caring towards others. All adults make a significant contribution to this area of the school's work.
Staffing, resources and accommodation	The school has sufficient well qualified teachers and has made good decisions about the need for specialist teaching in music and provision of additional classroom support staff. The accommodation is of good quality and the school is attractive, bright and well looked after. There are sufficient resources for most subjects except in information technology where there are too few good quality computers. For children in nursery and reception the outdoor large play equipment is inadequate.
Value for money	The school provides satisfactory value for money.

**Ethos is the climate for learning: attitudes to work, relationships and the commitment to high standards.*

The parents' views of the school

What most parents like about the school

VI. The encouragement given to play an active part in school life

VII. The ease with which they are able to approach the school

VIII. Improved communication with the headteacher and staff

IX. The quality of the information they receive about what is taught and about their children's progress

What some parents are not happy about

There were no negative views expressed.

Comment :

X. All parents who returned the pre inspection questionnaire, attended the meeting before the inspection or who were interviewed informally during the inspection, were overwhelmingly supportive of the school's work.

XI. The inspection team supports the positive views expressed by parents. However, the school should make greater efforts to involve parents in their children's learning at home.

KEY ISSUES FOR ACTION

To improve the standards and effectiveness of the school the governors, headteacher and staff should:

1. Raise standards in English and mathematics by:

XII. Setting clear learning targets for each pupil;

XIII. Using the information available from marking and assessment to plan lessons and activities which are closely matched to the needs of the pupils;

XIV. Identifying pupils with the potential for higher attainment and providing a more challenging programme to extend their skills and knowledge.

(Refer to paragraphs 10, 12, 14, 26, 29, 31, 37, 69, 78, 89, 94, 96, 98, 99)

2. Ensure that the expectations that teachers have of pupils are consistently focused on improvements in the quality of teaching and learning by:

XV. Monitoring the academic progress of every pupil closely;

XVI. Increasing the pace and development of work in lessons so that all pupils are encouraged to make faster progress;

XVII. Improving the consistency and quality of oral and written marking to ensure that goals for learning are set systematically;

XVIII. Ensuring that the adults who support pupils in classrooms are given clear guidance about their role in raising pupils' attainment.

(Refer to paragraphs 37, 40, 65, 71, 92, 93, 104, 109)

3. Involve all staff and governors in regular and systematic monitoring, evaluation and review of the curriculum and school development by:

XIX. Setting clear targets for improvement in teaching and learning through the school development plan;

XX. Using the analysis of pupils' performance in end of key stage tests and tasks to provide focus points for improvement;

XXI. Developing and implementing detailed action plans for raising standards in English and mathematics.

(Refer to paragraphs 40, 57, 59, 60, 95, 110)

4. In addition to the key issues above the following less important weaknesses should be considered for inclusion in the action plan:

XXII. Improve the range and quality of outdoor play equipment available for the youngest pupils in the school;

XXIII. Take steps to enhance and improve the number and quality of computers and associated software available for pupils in classrooms;

XXIV. Build on the already good relationships with parents in order to find ways of involving them more closely in their children's learning at home and at school.

(Refer to paragraphs 15, 51, 53, 66, 81, 130, 132)

INTRODUCTION

Characteristics of the school

- 1 Abbey VC Infant School is situated close to the centre of Nuneaton in Warwickshire. The school caters for pupils aged three to seven years in a building which is of Victorian origin with recent extensions and refurbishment. The nursery unit is housed in an adjacent temporary classroom. The school is partnered with the local Church of England junior school, which is about half a kilometre away.
- 2 Pupils are drawn almost exclusively from the local area. They are from below average social and economic circumstances. Most of the houses are owner occupied, with some local authority and church housing. Attainment of pupils on entry to the school is below average.
- 3 The school has 166 pupils on roll, 78 boys and 88 girls. In addition there is a 26 place Nursery Unit. Children start in the main school at the beginning of the year in which they are five. At the time of the inspection a large majority of the children in the reception year were under five years old. In the main school 22% of pupils are known to be eligible for free school meals, which is broadly in line with the national average. Pupils with English as an additional language form 3.6% of the school population, which is below the national average. The percentage of pupils identified with special educational needs is 28% and one pupil has a statement of special needs. This is broadly in line with the national figures.
- 4 The school has changed significantly since the last inspection when it was a first school. Re-organisation of Warwickshire schools took place in 1996, the school roll has fallen from 226 at the time of the last inspection and the Nursery Unit was added in 1998. The present headteacher was appointed after the last inspection and there are three new teaching staff.
- 5 The school has a strong Christian ethos, the aims have been reviewed recently and the headteacher has a vision for the future which is supported by the governing body and all staff for the health, welfare, social, personal and academic development of all pupils.
- 6 The school priorities for development and improvement over the next three years include:

A four year plan to monitor and evaluate curriculum development

Development of the role of subject managers;

Increased governor involvement in setting priorities and policies together with a systematic programme of school visits to form part of a review of school management

Key indicators

Attainment at Key Stage 1

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1		Year	Boys	Girls	Total
For latest reporting year:		1998	33	34	67

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Number of pupils at NC Level 2 or Above	Boys	19	17	21
	Girls	24	27	27
	Total	48	44	48
Percentage at NC Level 2 or above	School	64 (60)	66 (71)	72 (67)
	National	80 (74)	81 (80)	84 (83)

Teacher Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils at NC Level 2 or Above	Boys	20	21	22
	Girls	28	26	31
	Total	48	47	53
Percentage at NC Level 2 or above	School	72 (70)	70 (64)	79 (75)
	National	81 (80)	85 (83)	86 (85)

• **Attendance**

Percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year:			%
	Authorised	School	6
	Absence	National comparative data	5.7
	Unauthorised	School	0.1
	Absence	National comparative data	0.5

• **Exclusions**

Number of exclusions of pupils (of statutory school age) during the previous year:		Number
	Fixed period	0
	Permanent	0

• **Quality of teaching**

Percentage of teaching observed which is:		%
	Very good or better	0
	Satisfactory or better	100
	Less than satisfactory	0

PART A: ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

EDUCATIONAL STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS AT THE SCHOOL

Attainment and progress

- 7 The attainment of children on entry to the nursery unit is assessed using information gained from home visits and close observation of activities in which the children participate during their first few weeks in the unit. Overall, many of the youngest children attain at levels well below those expected for their age. They do not have appropriate speaking and listening skills and mathematical skills are limited. Children make satisfactory progress in all areas of learning during their time in the nursery unit. Language and literacy skills are successfully encouraged, enabling many children to gain a good understanding of, and enjoyment from, reading and writing. The nursery provides a good range of games and activities to promote mathematical understanding and to allow children to count and recognise numbers and shapes. Children in the nursery can talk about their experiences of the world around them and are developing skills through structured play and experiments. Physical co-ordination using tools and small toys is developed effectively and children enjoy the opportunities provided for creative expression through music and art.
- 8 In the reception year pupils are assessed using statutory baseline materials. Whilst many pupils achieve the learning outcomes expected for five year olds before they leave nursery, there are still a significant number whose attainment is below average. Pupils continue to make satisfactory progress. In literacy where the use of the national framework encourages them to enjoy reading and writing, they listen attentively and respond well to questions. Mathematical development continues to be satisfactory. Most pupils are able to count and recognise numbers to ten and can sort shapes and match numbers and objects correctly. In the reception classes pupils enjoy working with computers and extend their knowledge of the world around them through lessons and the use of materials, textures and construction toys. The physical co-ordination of pupils in lessons is often poor, children lack confidence and control of movements. Paintings, collage, music and the use of artefacts help to stimulate creative development.
- 9 The results of the 1998 end of Key Stage 1 tests showed that attainment in English was well below the national average in reading and below average in writing. The most recent tests (1999), show improvement in both aspects of English but national comparative data was not available at the time of the inspection. Few pupils achieve at the higher grade of level 3. There is no significant difference in the attainment of boys and girls. Inspection evidence confirms that pupils' attainment remains below the national expectation for their age.
- 10 Most pupils make broadly satisfactory progress in speaking, listening, reading and writing. Pupils begin their work in Key Stage 1 with low levels of spoken English and few literacy skills. By the time they are seven pupils have developed confidence in speaking to each other and to adults. Many are able to read simple texts and enjoy books but they do not read fluently and have insufficient knowledge of language structure to decode unknown words. Too few pupils are able to produce extended pieces of writing though they do have good handwriting skills. The introduction of the Literacy Hour is beginning to have a positive impact on the development of key skills in reading and writing.
- 11 Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress, receiving appropriate support to enable them to achieve the targets set in their individual education plans.
- 12 Attainment in mathematics in the end of the key stage is below the national average, though there has been a slightly improving trend during the last two years. The most recent tests show that few pupils achieve at the higher Level 3 grade. Inspection evidence confirms the overall view of below average attainment. Year 2 pupils are able to recognise, count and calculate simple number problems correctly, but few are able to solve more complex problems and only a small minority of pupils can explain the strategies used to reach their solutions.
- 13 Progress in mathematics is however, broadly satisfactory throughout the key stage. The introduction of the numeracy framework is giving pupils a wider repertoire of oral and mental strategies. Higher and

lower attaining pupils are not always identified well so that the progress of lower attainers is limited and the work for higher attainers sometimes lacks challenge.

- 14 Pupils in Year 2 attain at average levels in science and their progress is satisfactory. By the time they are seven a large majority of pupils have gained a good level of scientific knowledge, can record their observations of experiments and are aware of many of the basic conditions required to support life. Progress in science is sometimes limited because there are too few opportunities for pupils to develop skills in scientific enquiry or to make independent investigations leading to conclusions which can be shared and tested in class. Work in science provides a good example of the way in which the pupils' literacy skills are used effectively in recording their work. The link with mathematics is not so well used to improve and extend pupils' thinking.
- 15 Pupils make satisfactory progress in developing skills in information technology. They use computers to communicate information and have good basic keyboard skills. There are some aspects of work in this area where progress is limited by the lack of appropriate hardware and software, particularly in controlling and modelling using technology. By the time they are seven pupils are attaining at the level expected nationally.
- 16 In religious education pupils make satisfactory progress in relation to the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. They have satisfactory knowledge of the Christian faith and of other world religions. They recount well known Bible stories and many pupils show that they understand some of the moral and social implications demonstrated by the stories.
- 17 In art, geography, history, music and physical education pupils make satisfactory progress. By the time they are seven most pupils have gained an appropriate level of knowledge, skills and understanding in these subjects. Older pupils are capable of producing pictures and paintings in the style of famous artists. They can use different media to depict their creative ideas and have learned different techniques in painting, modelling and collage. Musical skills have improved since the last inspection. Pupils sing well and can follow simple rhythm patterns accurately. They have opportunities to perform in assemblies and can compose their own music in lessons. Physical co-ordination and floor skills improve as the pupils progress through the school, though in gymnastics their progress using large apparatus is limited. In geography and history pupils are able to discuss similarities and differences in the local area compared to rural communities and they are developing an awareness of the past through their work using the lives of local people as a stimulus.
- 18 No judgement has been made about progress in design and technology though there is evidence of a satisfactory programme of teaching and learning offered to pupils which should ensure progress.

· **Attitudes, behaviour and personal development**

- 19 Virtually all pupils' have positive attitudes to their work and to school. They show great interest in what they are asked to do and apply themselves conscientiously to their work. They take pride in their achievements and are happy to share their work with their teachers or other adults. Most pupils are able to sustain high levels of concentration through their lessons, on occasions, showing that they are able to work effectively without direct teacher input. They will listen attentively to each other and are happy to share ideas.
- 20 Behaviour at the school has improved and is now consistently very good. When they come to school, during lessons, at lunchtimes, at playtimes and when moving about the school virtually all pupils achieve the expected high standards of behaviour. Behaviour in assemblies is particularly good. There were no exclusions in the last year. During the inspection there was no evidence of bullying or lack of respect for school property.
- 21 The school continues to place great emphasis on the quality of relationships. They continue to be consistently very good. Pupils form constructive relationships with each other, with teachers and with other adults. This is particularly noticeable during assemblies and at lunchtimes in the dining hall. Pupils work co-operatively together in classes and at play, demonstrating that they will listen with interest to each other and will try to understand the other person's point of view. Most pupils are

consistently patient, tolerant and show understanding for others.

22 The school provides many good opportunities for pupils to show initiative and take responsibility and they demonstrate that the trust is well placed. Social skills and self-discipline are developed constantly. Even the youngest children are encouraged to work independently, choosing their own activities. Pupils regularly perform jobs within the classroom and around the school. As they progress through the school greater degrees of independence are encouraged. Pupils are involved in fund raising for a number of charities.

23 The positive attitudes to learning, very good relationships, very high standards of behaviour and the quality of the opportunities for personal development are important strengths of the school and have a positive effect on the quality of teaching and learning.

. **Attendance**

24 Attendance at the school has improved and is now consistently satisfactory. There is some unauthorised absence but this is below the national average. Punctuality continues to be good; almost all pupils are punctual and many arrive early. They come happily to school, eager and ready to learn, enabling the school to make a prompt and efficient start to the school day.

. **QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED**

. **Teaching**

25 The overall quality of teaching throughout the school is consistently satisfactory, almost half of lessons are good. Teaching strengths were seen in all classes but particularly in the nursery unit and one of the Year2 classes. There were no unsatisfactory lessons during the inspection. All of the teaching was at least satisfactory and almost a half of lessons were good.

26 The areas for improvement identified by inspection observations almost always relate to the level of expectations demonstrated by teachers focused on pupils' attainment. In some lessons the level of challenge presented to pupils with the potential for higher attainment is limited and there is a need for greater clarity about the learning objectives for each lesson and the targets which all pupils could aspire to reach.

27 All teachers have satisfactory subject knowledge. They understand the personal development needs of their pupils particularly well and build positive relationships in the classrooms based on mutual trust and respect. Teachers use uniformly good behaviour management strategies and are clear about their expectations of behaviour, personal interactions and courtesy in the classroom.

28 In the best lessons teachers are very clear about the learning that is to take place. They are brisk and thorough in their introductions and explanations and careful to make sure that their expectations about the learning outcomes of the lesson are shared with the pupils at the beginning of the lesson and checked at the end.

29 Long, medium and short term planning is detailed and careful. Teachers plan in year group and early years teams. This is successful in ensuring parity and equal access to the curriculum for all pupils but is not always sufficiently focused on achieving continuity and progression from nursery to Year 2. In one reception class planning is not appropriately linked to the areas of learning for children under five. Tasks are not consistently matched to children's current knowledge and understanding and the teaching is occasionally over-directive. The planning for literacy and numeracy for all classes/under-fives is useful in identifying activities to support learning but does not consistently identify the skills and knowledge to be gained as a result of using them. The pace and development of some oral/mental mathematics sessions is too slow and teachers do not focus on the ways in which they can increase the rate of pupils' agility with numbers through this activity.

- 30 Classrooms are well organised, presenting attractive environments for pupils learning that have a good focus on literacy and numeracy. Resources and equipment are well prepared and used effectively.
- 31 All teachers monitor pupils' work conscientiously and there are consistently applied record keeping procedures in use. In practice, this work is not fully effective because the records are not used sufficiently to check on individual pupils' progress or attainment. The information is not used to set learning targets for pupils or to identify strengths and weaknesses in knowledge, understanding and skills. Marking, though undertaken regularly, is not used sufficiently to help pupils to improve their work though oral feedback is often of good quality. Homework is used appropriately to reinforce and complement work in English and mathematics.
- 32 The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory and usually supported appropriately by learning support assistants.

The curriculum and assessment

- 33 The school provides a broad and balanced curriculum which includes all the subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education. Particular prominence is given to the core subjects of English and mathematics. In science there is considerable emphasis on pupils acquiring knowledge, but there are too few opportunities for them to carry out work of an investigative nature. Time allocated to design & technology is low, but this is not affecting standards at present. On balance, the curriculum meets the statutory requirements and promotes pupils' intellectual, physical and personal development well.
- 34 The curriculum for pupils under five both in the nursery and reception classes addresses the areas of learning and contributes to pupils reaching Desirable Learning Outcomes by the age of five, although in one of the reception classes the planning is not explicitly related to the areas of learning.
- 35 There is good provision for pupils' personal and social education. Sex education is handled effectively through a health and educational programme. This aspect of the curriculum plays an important part in establishing the very good standards of behaviour and personal relationships which are found in the school.
- 36 The curriculum is enriched by a good extra-curricular provision. This is a small school and yet there are a number of clubs and activities provided for pupils to develop their interests and skills outside the normal school day. These include music, sport, gymnastics and drama. This gives the pupils the opportunity to perform or entertain members of the local community.
- 37 Policies have been agreed for all subjects. These provide a useful framework for the teaching of these subjects and have helped in ensuring consistency in the way they are taught. There are schemes of work for all subjects and teachers follow either schemes they have devised themselves or ones which have been agreed nationally. Planning for progression and continuity is unsatisfactory, although long- and medium-term plans are in place. There are weaknesses in short-term curriculum planning, leading to work being undertaken with no clear differences in content or level of difficulty. Pupils' progress in some subjects is impeded as a consequence.
- 38 Most pupils have equality of access, irrespective of age and gender. The curriculum for pupils with special educational needs is appropriate and effectively planned. However, the systematic review and recording of progress towards targets for the more able is not consistently addressed. Pupils are well supported in class.
- 39 Assessment procedures for pupils under five are good. Baseline assessment procedures, which have recently been introduced, provide useful information which will be used to gauge progress in Reception. For pupils of statutory school age, assessment procedures are good and the legal requirements are fully met. Record-keeping is detailed but is not used to make suitable modifications to the activities and experience of those who need extra help. The records maintained in the individual education plans of pupils on Stage 2 and above of the special educational needs register are satisfactory and are well

documented.

- 40 Pupils' progress is assessed regularly by teachers, but there are still inconsistencies in the way in which information is collected and used. Too little attention is given to using information concerning what the pupils know, can do and understand to determine the next stages of their learning. Assessment data is not carefully analysed and the information is not used as a basis for raising attainment.

. **Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development**

- 41 Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is a strength of the school. This is reflected in the commitment to the school's values as well as its aims and continues the positive approach identified in the previous inspection report.
- 42 Provision for spiritual development is good. The daily act of worship meets statutory requirements and provides a significant spiritual focus for the day. Pupils are generally fully involved in the worship and use the time for prayer and reflection with sensitivity. Religious education lessons make a very positive contribution to pupils' development, providing good opportunities for pupils to reflect on their own experiences and values and to link them to the beliefs of Christian and other faiths. Pupils demonstrate awareness of spirituality in the world around them in other curriculum work, as seen in their responses to handling unusual objects of different texture and to the work of famous artists.
- 43 The school provides very well for the moral development of pupils and this is linked to the very good provision for social development. The school has a very positive ethos, promoting care and consideration for everyone within the school community. Assemblies, religious education lessons and class circle times encourage pupils to develop their own values and understand what is acceptable behaviour. These sessions provide good opportunities for pupils to discuss issues and to develop their understanding of right and wrong. Each class has a clearly displayed code of conduct. This is reinforced by the attitudes and expectations of all adults working in the school, in the ways that they talk to pupils and promote value and respect for everyone. The school enables pupils to consider moral responsibility in a wider arena through their thoughtful support for charities and links with a child in Kenya.
- 44 The school provides a clear framework for encouraging the development of good behaviour. This is reinforced by a rewards system that values the many different contributions and efforts that pupils make to the life of the school. Parents recognise this as a strength of the school and enjoy supporting their children at the weekly reward assembly. Pupils are encouraged to develop self-discipline and awareness of the needs of others. They respond well in classes, assemblies and when moving around the school.
- 45 Provision for pupils' cultural development is satisfactory. Pupils are given good opportunities to understand some of their own cultural traditions through links with the community, including work in history on local famous people. They are beginning to develop some understanding of creative and aesthetic aspects of our western culture. Positive experiences of other cultures are promoted throughout the school, particularly through music, art and religious education lessons. The school participates in special local events that celebrate the multicultural nature of the community but does not make good use of other local opportunities.

. **Support, guidance and pupils' welfare**

- 46 The school gives its pupils good support and guidance and effectively promotes the welfare, health and safety of all pupils in a caring, harmonious environment. Staff show great concern for the well-being of pupils and a wide range of measures exists to promote their development. Teachers are sensitive to the needs of pupils and consistently monitor well their personal development and their ability to cope on a day to day basis. Pupils with special educational needs are monitored carefully and receive good quality support. The school is small enough for all staff to know the pupils well and relationships between staff and pupils throughout the school are very good. Older pupils are well prepared for the transfer to their next schools and look forward confidently to the move.

- 47 All staff continue to work hard to improve standards of behaviour. Procedures for monitoring and promoting discipline and good behaviour have improved and are now very good. The school behaviour policy is understood by the whole school community and is consistently applied. Staff pre-empt incidents of possible misbehaviour with firm, calm intervention maintaining good tight control. In addition they encourage good behaviour by making the school a warm, caring and happy environment. Incidents of bullying are rare and are dealt with speedily, sensitively and effectively.
- 48 There are proper procedures for monitoring attendance. Since the last inspection the school has been successful in improving levels of attendance. Registers are marked correctly and efficiently at the start of the day and after lunch. All absences are properly noted and contact made with parents to justify absence. Provision is made for attendance figures to be reported in the brochure and in the governors annual report to parents although the last figures quoted were incorrect.
- 49 Child protection continues to be handled effectively with the headteacher as the designated person. All staff are aware of the need for vigilance and the steps to take if suspicions are aroused.
- 50 Health and safety is well promoted in the school. Inspections have been carried out to identify potential hazards and remedial action taken where appropriate. All staff are safety-conscious and watch for the security of the children. Electrical and physical education equipment and fire extinguishers are tested regularly and hazardous materials kept securely away from pupils. Overall, all staff at the school work hard to successfully create a safe and caring environment where the well-being of pupils is promoted very effectively.

Partnership with parents and the community

- 51 The partnership with parents and the community continues to be strengthened and is now good. Parents, governors and other adults are encouraged to become involved in the work of the school and many respond enthusiastically by participating in a range of activities. Several parents and other adults help regularly within the classroom around the school and on outside trips and visits. Adult helpers are deployed effectively, they are given clear directions and their help is well structured. They are knowledgeable, relate well to the pupils and good use is made of their time. The school values highly the contributions made by parents within the school. However, involvement by parents at home in their children's learning is less satisfactory. The school has not been as successful in creating a partnership where sufficient parents are providing the necessary support at home.
- 52 While there is no formal Parent Association a range of events is organised to provide support for the work of the school. Parents interviewed before and during the inspection were overwhelmingly enthusiastic and supportive of the school and its ethos.
- 53 Parents are well informed about the school and their children's activities through a good quality range of letters, newsletters, reports and meetings. Reports give good information about attainment, effort and progress but do not include sufficient detail about future targets for improvement. Information given to parents in the school prospectus and the governors' annual report to parents is helpful.
- 54 There are also good links with the police and other specialist agencies. The school has worked hard to build the links with the local community and takes the initiative in organising events to strengthen the partnership further. Concerts and other functions are organised to celebrate the various festivals. Performances are arranged for members of the community as well as for parents. There is a strong link with local churches with two local priests having regular input. The recent initiative of inviting former pupils back to visit the school was highly successful.
- 55 The harmonious and comprehensive relationships with the wider local community are a strength and provide substantial enrichment to pupils' personal development and understanding of the outside world.

THE MANAGEMENT AND EFFICIENCY OF THE SCHOOL

Leadership and management

- 56 The school benefits from the positive and purposeful leadership of the headteacher. Her vision for the development of the school is based on clear principles for the personal and academic growth of all pupils, together with a strong focus on the value and contribution made by all staff and a management partnership with the governing body which enhances the ethos of the school. The Christian aims and values of the school are clear and explicit. They underpin all that happens in the school and are subscribed to by all those involved in the school.
- 57 The governing body works with dedication and commitment to the school, has appropriate committee structures and has made improvements since the last inspection in ensuring greater involvement in the life and work of the school. Governors recognise the need to monitor standards and pupils' performance but do not yet focus their visits, questions and strategic discussions sufficiently on raising standards or improving the quality of teaching and learning.
- 58 The headteacher has worked hard to foster positive relationships with staff, governors, parents and the local community. Her work has helped to maintain the high regard in which the school is held locally and has laid the foundation for more rigorous approaches to the analysis and review of pupils' performance in end of key stage tests. The headteacher is also aware of the low level of parental expectation in relation to pupils' academic progress and she is working to promote this aspect of the school through partnership with parents and encouragement for them to be more closely involved in their children's learning.
- 59 Staff have been encouraged to undertake classroom observations of subject development but further work is required to ensure that such practice has a clear focus on the standards attained by pupils and the quality of teaching.
- 60 The school development plan is a useful document which guides decisions about the main curriculum and management priorities. The plan contains sufficient detail and suitable timelines for action but does not provide sufficient guidance for subject co-ordinators, staff and governors about the systematic procedures required for monitoring, evaluation and review of the school's work, success or value for money from the actions taken.
- 61 Statutory requirements are met in full and routine management and administration is of good quality.

Staffing, accommodation and learning resources

- 62 The school has sufficient teachers to meet the demands of the National Curriculum and who are well qualified and experienced to teach the age groups within the school. A good level of non-teaching support is provided in all classes as well as extra support for pupils with special educational needs, both high and low attainers. The school has effectively addressed the teaching of subjects in which staff lack confidence by employing three specialist part-time music teachers and using an enthusiastic classroom assistant to support the teaching of information technology. Arrangements for the induction of staff are satisfactory although there is not yet an induction policy to ensure a consistent approach. Procedures for appraisal are satisfactory. In the interim period before new national requirements have been implemented, the headteacher carries out an annual review to ensure job descriptions are appropriate and identify training needs linked to the requirements of the school development plan. All members of staff have job descriptions.

63 The school has good accommodation for teaching, group work and administration that has improved significantly since the last inspection report. Classrooms are reasonably spacious and there is suitable space for storage. The school presents a very attractive appearance. It is well looked after with attractive displays. The new nursery is housed in a mobile classroom which is secure and appropriate to the needs of young children. The nursery has a secure play area but under fives in the reception classes share the main school playground. The school hall is adequate although a little small for the needs of the school. The library is attractive and in a central position which enables good access although it is not used well by pupils individually.

64 Resources for learning are satisfactory for most subjects and are good for physical education. The school has a good range of books, including 'Big Books' to support the work in literacy and the library is adequately stocked with information books. History and geography resources are effectively supplemented through the county loan service. Hardware and software for information technology is improving rapidly but is still insufficient to deliver all the programmes of study for the subject. Resources for design and technology are also currently inadequate to for pupils to develop appropriate skills. There is insufficient large equipment for the nursery and under fives to ensure that the children have appropriate opportunities to develop physical co-ordination and skills.

The efficiency of the school

65 Financial planning is of sound quality; the most recent financial audit report found only minor control procedures deficient. The school has taken appropriate steps to remedy these. Governors are provided with regular, good quality budget information which is used by the finance sub-committee of the governing body to guide decision making. Governors have had a clear commitment to maintaining a high level of additional adult support in the school. This has proved beneficial in ensuring that the ethos of the school, with its emphasis on positive behaviour, pupil confidence and self-esteem, has been well maintained. The approach is currently less successful in helping to raise standards because the deployment and use of the support staff is not always effective.

66 The quality of resources to support teaching and learning is often good but in some subject areas there are too few resources to promote good quality and high standards. There are deficiencies in the resources available for design and technology. Hardware and software for information technology, though improving, is still insufficient to deliver all of the programmes of study for the subject. There is not enough large play equipment for children in the nursery and the youngest Key Stage 1 pupils to develop physical co-ordination and skills.

67 Taking into account:

the below average attainment of pupils on entry to school;

the good progress of children in the nursery and the satisfactory progress now being made in Key Stage 1 classes in most subjects;

the strength of the school's approach to pupils' personal development;

the always at least satisfactory and often good quality of teaching throughout the school;

the awareness of the need to focus more strongly on improving standards in English and mathematics;

the strengths of the headteacher in leading the school and her vision for the future;

the school is providing satisfactory value for money.

PART B: CURRICULUM AREAS AND SUBJECTS

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN UNDER FIVE

68 Children are admitted to the nursery on a part-time basis at the beginning of the school year in which they have their fourth birthday and to the reception classes at the beginning of the school year in which they become five. Nearly all of the children from the nursery, which was established last year, move on to the reception classes in the main school. At the time of the inspection, the children in both the nursery and reception classes were in the induction period to school in which only half the class were present at any one session. Nearly all the children were still under five.

69 In both the nursery and reception classes there is good home school liaison with teachers making a home visit prior to the child starting school. Statutory baseline assessment takes place in the reception classes. The school has recently changed to another scheme which informs teachers' short term planning but does not yet provide sufficient information for identifying trends and value added.

70 There is a wide range of levels of attainment on entry to both the nursery and reception classes but attainment overall is below average. Pupils make satisfactory progress in the nursery and reception classes and most achieve the desirable outcomes in the areas of learning by the end of their reception year.

71 The quality of teaching is good in the nursery and is at least satisfactory and often good in the reception classes. Teachers provide an appropriate range of activities for the children. However, there is not consistent planning to the areas of learning by all teachers of the under fives. There is sometimes a lack of clarity in the definition of the learning objectives and a less satisfactory match of task to attainment level. The teaching observed during the period of inspection was focused on children's personal and social development and was effective in ensuring that they settle well into school routines and feel secure and confident. Teachers give clear instructions and explanations, supported by a high level of discussion at both group and individual level, which enable children to understand clearly what they have to do and promote learning from the tasks and activities. Where the teaching is good, the teacher makes particularly good use of the incidental learning opportunities that arise.

72 In both the nursery and reception classes the nursery assistant, classroom assistants and other adult helpers make a valuable contribution to children's personal and social development and to their learning.

PERSONAL AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

73 Children in the nursery make good progress in their personal and social development. Children have only attended a few nursery sessions but most come in confidently and leave their parents or carers without fuss. They choose their activities and most play well together. They relate well to adults and respond to instructions. They are becoming independent and are learning to care and to help each other. For example, the nursery teacher encourages them to help each other with putting painting aprons on and off, rather than using adult help.

74 This good progress is maintained in the reception classes where many of the children have attended the nursery and are familiar with the school. Nearly all children are attentive in short whole class sessions. They are able to choose activities, concentrate sufficiently to achieve a task and move on sensibly to another activity. Most are able to co-operate in pairs and small groups, sharing resources and taking turns.

LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

75 Most children do not have appropriate speaking and listening skills for their age on entry to the

nursery although a few children are quite articulate. Children make satisfactory progress in language and literacy skills. They enjoy sharing books and are able to handle them appropriately. They listen to stories and participate in role-play activities. They are beginning to recognise their own name. Children have access to a variety of writing tools and materials to practise making marks and to develop an understanding of the purpose of writing.

76 Children's progress is satisfactory in the reception classes where language and literacy skills are developed using the national literacy framework. Children enjoy sharing a 'Big Book' as a whole class activity. They listen attentively and respond well to questions, gaining information from the illustrations. They are developing knowledge of the use of positional words. Children are able to use appropriate vocabulary when asked to make choices and to give reasons. Children are developing early writing skills and are beginning to write their names.

MATHEMATICS

77 There was little evidence of specific activities in the nursery to promote children's mathematical development as the focus is on social and language skills for the induction period. Children demonstrated a wide range of mathematical knowledge when engaged in free choice activities. A few can count accurately to ten. Children use numbers in everyday situations as when using the telephone to 'phone' the doctor. Some are able to match one to one in the home play area and in other activities.

78 In the reception classes children make satisfactory progress in their mathematical knowledge and understanding. Most children can count confidently to five. Working within five, they are able to identify a missing number in the sequence and the number before or after a given number. Some of the older reception children are able to name two-dimensional shapes and to sort three-dimensional shapes by given properties. Children are able to match a number of objects one to one and to record their findings graphically with adult support. However, opportunities are limited for children to experience a range of simple sorting and matching activities to underpin their mathematical understanding

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

79 In the nursery, children talk about recent events in their lives. They are aware of different places through their holidays and have built up a photographic record. Children learn about a variety of materials through playing and experimentation. A small group of children were fascinated by a collection of seashells and were able to comment on texture, shape and colour. Home play activities and small wheeled toys enable them to develop and interpret the world around them and to develop their skills of building and joining.

80 In the reception classes children enjoy experimenting on the computer. They experience a range of activities that promote understanding of the world around them. In one class a vets corner enabled children to sort animals into pets and farm animals and a specific collection of books about animals gave children further opportunities to find out about the different categories. A good lesson was observed where children explored the features of different objects, naming them and identified their characteristics and whether they were rough or smooth. Children use materials and equipment to make a collage or model. They make constructions with shape blocks and bricks. They are developing appropriate understanding of different materials through free choice activities using sand, paint and play-dough.

Physical Development

81 There are limited opportunities in both the nursery and reception classes for outside play using large wheeled toys and other activity equipment. Co-ordination using tools and small toys is developed more effectively. Most children handle paint brushes and glue sticks competently to enable them to achieve what they require.

82 Children in the reception classes are not sufficiently well co-ordinated in physical activities. Many do not yet have an appropriate awareness and control over their own bodies. Some are able to copy movements and use their body to make different shapes but without fluency. Children can generally handle scissors, brushes, pencils and other tools with satisfactory precision.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

83 Children in the nursery have appropriate opportunities to express themselves through exploring a range of media. They use paints to make a representation on paper using a range of colours. They handle crayons and are able to use a hammer and nails. They enjoy singing together and are learning the names and characteristics of different notes through the specialist teaching of the 'Music Monsters' programme. They are beginning to follow the rhythm and timing of music by clapping and other actions. They show understanding of high and low, slow and fast in music.

84 In the reception classes children are encouraged to develop their own ideas in creating pictures, paintings and collages and by the end of the reception year have produced a good range of art and craft work. They have appropriate opportunities to explore texture, shape and form through handling a variety of materials to make pictures and artifacts. Children continue with the effective 'Music Monsters' programme in the reception year and have additional opportunities for listening to music during circle time and when they join whole school worship.

ENGLISH, MATHEMATICS AND SCIENCE

English

85 By the age of seven pupils' attainment in English is below the national expectation for their age. This is confirmed by the results in the 1999 national tests in reading and writing. There has been some improvement in reading and particularly in writing since last year but very few pupils achieve the higher grade of level 3. There is no significant difference between the attainment of boys and girls.

86 There has been no significant improvement in any aspect of English since the last inspection report although it is difficult to make a direct comparison because the school type has changed and no longer has any Key Stage 2 pupils.

87 Pupils make satisfactory progress in speaking and listening. Many start school with low levels of spoken English. They do not have a wide vocabulary and have difficulty in speaking in sentences. Pupils are given a good range of opportunities to develop confidence in speaking to adults and to each other. Circle time for personal and social education makes a good contribution to enabling pupils to listen to each other, take turns in speaking and articulate more clearly.

88 Pupils make broadly satisfactory progress in reading and writing. By the age of seven, most pupils can read simple text although few are able to read confidently and fluently with expression. Pupils enjoy looking at books and use pictures to gain meaning from text. Many pupils do not have sufficient phonic knowledge to help them decode unknown words. Most take a school reading book home to read but, at this early stage of the school year, few pupils can talk knowledgeably about favourite authors or titles. Although library sessions are timetabled for each class, pupils are not yet confident in using the school library to access information independently. The school provides opportunities for pupils to widen their knowledge and enjoyment of books and authors through special events and book fairs.

89 By the end of Key Stage 1 most pupils are able to write simple sentences demarcated by capital letters and full stops. They are able to spell basic, frequently used words and to see spelling patterns in words. Pupils enjoy identifying rhyming words and are able to contribute their own suggestions. Few of the older pupils are able to produce writing of sufficient length and complexity that shows the development of ideas, characters

and events. Pupils are developing good handwriting skills using print form and work is generally well presented.

90 Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress. Targets for improvement are clearly identified on their individual education plans. Appropriate support is provided within the classroom and through specific withdrawal groups, working with a support assistant under the direction of the class teacher.

91 All the teaching is at least satisfactory and a small proportion is good. Teachers within each year group plan well together to ensure appropriate implementation of the National Literacy Strategy. In the best lessons, teachers use effective questioning techniques to challenge pupils. Good opportunities are provided for reinforcement and consolidation of learning without losing the pace of the lesson. In one lesson, the class evaluated and corrected one pupil's work as a whole class activity. This was introduced in a sensitive and positive way so that the pupils gave praise for the original good work before considering ways that it might be made even better.

92 Teachers have high expectations of behaviour. They usually give clear instructions and explanations. In many of the lessons, however, the group tasks and activities are not sufficiently differentiated or well matched to the wide range of attainment levels in the class to enable all pupils to make appropriate progress. In some lessons, lower attaining pupils are given tasks that are too difficult for them to achieve independently without any supporting resources; in others, teachers do not have sufficiently high expectations of the higher attaining pupils to ensure that the work is challenging. When this occurs, pupils lose concentration, become noisier and standards of behavior deteriorate.

93 Teachers carry out a range of detailed assessment procedures but not enough use is made of this information to identify and target pupils' individual needs and to modify lesson planning accordingly. Work is generally marked regularly, often with positive remarks, but teachers rarely provide useful comments to show pupils ways to improve their writing. There is rarely any indication in pupils' written work that they are required to address errors.

94 There has been a significant increase in resources to support the literacy hour. The school has a good range of 'Big Books' and group readers. A commercial scheme to develop phonic knowledge with spelling and handwriting skills has recently been introduced but there is a lack of clarity in its use. The school library is attractive with an adequate number of fiction and non-fiction books but is under-used by the pupils.

95 The literacy co-ordinator has successfully led the implementation of the National Literacy Strategy in school and developed appropriate policies and guidance for the staff. Monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning in the subject is not well established throughout the school. This needs to be a priority for development in order for the school to track progress and clearly identify specific issues to raise standards of attainment in English.

.

Mathematics

96 Pupils' attainment in mathematics by the age of seven is well below that expected for their age. This is confirmed by the results in the 1999 national mathematics tests. There has been some improvement over the last two years in the pupil's ability to use number and algebra under test conditions. The school has not made significant progress in raising attainment in mathematics at Level 3 and above in the national tests.

97 The attainment of pupils in mathematics lessons observed during the inspection was broadly satisfactory. In Year 1 pupils are able to count and recognise numbers to ten and are beginning to make simple calculations. Many are identifying two digit numbers accurately and higher attaining pupils can add numbers correctly before checking using calculators. In Year 2 pupils are able to hold larger numbers in their heads as a strategy for quick calculation and can solve money problems. Some pupils in each year group are able to describe their methods appropriately when presented with simple number problems.

98 A large majority of pupils are currently making satisfactory progress in mathematics. They are

developing understanding of the position and value of number and gaining skill in oral calculation but too few are able to explain the strategies used and why they are suitable in different situations; often they know what they did but not why.

99 Teaching in mathematics is consistently satisfactory or better. Planning is guided by the numeracy framework but teachers are not yet ensuring that the pace and development of lessons is sufficiently brisk or focused on the skills identified in the planning. The pace of some of the oral/mental sessions is too slow and teachers are not always using the sessions appropriately to encourage pupils' mental agility. In one good lesson in Year 2 the teacher was brisk, clear about her expectations for learning and there was a focus on practical experience supported by the use of mathematical language. In another lesson in Year 1 the teacher used a puppet to good effect to illustrate counting methods. Teachers sometimes spend too long on one activity and plenary sessions become rushed, checking on work completed but not used to clarify concepts or assess progress in the lesson for individuals or groups of pupils. In the best lessons teachers establish the routines and expectations for learning in mathematics well. Where mathematics is not so well taught the level of challenge offered in terms of problem solving and application of strategies in different mathematical contexts is insufficient. The Numeracy initiative is being implemented effectively throughout the school in relation to teachers' planning but work is required to ensure that the range of activities required by the strategy is applied consistently and with a clear focus on standards and attainment in mathematics.

100 Pupils respond well in lessons settling to activities quickly but not always kept on task by teachers or supporting adults. When the teaching is of good quality pupils respond with enthusiasm and show enjoyment when working with number problems. Pupils behave well in lessons, only a few in each class finding concentration difficult. Teachers are quick to check and respond to ensure that the work of all pupils is not unduly disrupted.

101 The resources used in lessons are generally sufficient and of good quality. Teachers and pupils use practical equipment well as an aid to learning. The mathematics co-ordinator has undertaken an audit of the current practice in classrooms and has some good ideas for future development of mathematics in the school. The role of the co-ordinator in monitoring the performance of pupils is not developed sufficiently.

Science

102 In 1998 teacher assessment showed that standards in science were below the national average and below that for similar schools. The 1999 results show a similar level of attainment.

103 The evidence available during the inspection indicates that pupils are currently making satisfactory progress and that their attainment is broadly average. They acquire a sound knowledge of scientific facts relevant to their age but their skills in scientific enquiry are not well developed. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress.

104 By the age of seven, the end of Key Stage 1, pupils can name the parts of the body and have a good understanding of the need for a healthy diet and lifestyle. They recognise the basic conditions necessary to maintain plant life and are aware of some of the forces involved in the movement of objects. In recording their observations they use simple diagrams and charts. There are too few opportunities for them to develop their skills of scientific enquiry to the levels required.

105 In a good lesson in Year 2, on the theme of health and growth, pupils were using a wide range of resources to identify and classify food types, asking questions in order to make comparisons. In another lesson in a different class but on the same theme, there was a more restricted range of samples for pupils to make comparisons. As a result pupils found it difficult to draw satisfactory independent conclusions.

106 Attitudes are mainly good. Pupils are mainly enthusiastic about their work and sustain concentration. Relationships among pupils and between pupils and adults are good.

107 In the small number of lessons observed the quality of teaching was broadly satisfactory. Lessons were managed well, and pupils worked reasonably hard on the tasks set for them. While a suitable range of teaching strategies is normally employed, there is a tendency on occasions to be over-directive. This

results in pupils, especially higher attainers, not being sufficiently extended in their thinking.

- 108 Presentation has improved since the last inspection. Pupils' work is marked frequently but in most classes insufficient written feedback is provided for the use of pupils in making further improvements. Good application is made of pupils' literacy skills to record experimental findings, but little use is made of numeracy skills or information technology to support learning in science.
- 109 Classroom assistants make a valuable contribution to the quality of teaching and learning. At times they are over-supportive, restricting pupils' opportunities for independent learning.
- 110 The science co-ordinator is relatively new to the post and has so far had little opportunity to have an impact on standards. The monitoring and supportive role is undeveloped at present. The school has modified its scheme of work to include the nationally-approved scheme. Assessments are undertaken regularly but teachers do not make sufficient use of assessments to inform pupils' future learning.
- 111 The quality and quantity of resources available throughout the school is satisfactory.

OTHER SUBJECTS OR COURSES

Art

- 112 Pupils at Key Stage 1 make satisfactory progress and by the age of seven they have had experience of working with a range of media. They have learned how to mix colours and are selective in their use of colour in creating pictures. Pupils have a good understanding of what to look for in studying the paintings of recognised artists. Their experience has included the works of Cézanne, Monet, Kandinsky and Jackson Pollock.
- 113 Three lessons were observed. Some good work was observed in a class of Year 2 pupils, who produced some very careful observational paintings of fruit in the style of Cézanne. The teaching was good. Pupils were clear about what was expected of them and responded well to questions and explanations. They enjoyed the activity and applied themselves conscientiously to the task.
- 114 Pupils have opportunities to experiment with a variety of materials and tools to produce three-dimensional work and there is evidence of appropriate range and developmental skills in this aspect of the art curriculum.
- 115 Pupils concentrate hard and make an effort in their work. They are appreciative of the work of others and most co-operate well in art lessons, talking quite constructively about what they are doing: sharing resources and helping one another when appropriate.
- 116 Teaching was satisfactory in two lessons and good in the third. In the latter lesson the class teacher introduced the lesson well and set high expectations through effective questioning and direct teaching of techniques. In the plenary session positive feedback was given to pupils on ways to improve their work. The lack of time allocated to art is a problem common to all classes and narrows the range of skills that can be taught successfully. Standards are not as high as those reported at the time of the last inspection.
- 117 The subject co-ordinator has provided effective guidance to ensure the progressive teaching of skills and knowledge. Monitoring and evaluation is through a general overview of displays. The co-ordinator has identified further development of an art portfolio as a strategy for further raising standards in art. Resources are satisfactory.

Design and Technology

- 118 No design & technology was observed during the inspection and there is insufficient evidence on which to make a judgement on progress. However, the evidence gathered from discussion with pupils, scrutiny of retained work and photographs indicate that the programme of study is being followed.

- 119 There are good examples on display from Year 2 pupils of bridge structures which show the development of planning, designing, constructing and evaluation skills. Photographic evidence shows that pupils have undertaken some projects in school and elsewhere from enrichment activity days involving teamwork.
- 120 The subject co-ordinator has drawn up a revised scheme of work for the subject. The monitoring and support role is undeveloped at the moment.
- 121 The school has a limited but satisfactory range of resources and materials available for design and technology, including construction kits. Good use is made of recycled materials. At present there is no assessment scheme. The allocation of teaching time for the subject is insufficient.

· **Geography**

- 122 Only one geography lesson was observed during the inspection. Judgements are therefore based largely on the scrutiny of pupils' work and teachers' planning. Pupils are making satisfactory progress in relation to their knowledge and understanding of the locality and are able to talk about differences and similarities between their own home town and countryside environments. They are beginning to recognise the effects of man on the landscape. In Year 2 pupils used a postcard activity and role play in a travel agents to describe the features of town and country with accuracy and good use of subject vocabulary.
- 123 The policy and scheme of work for geography is satisfactory. Geography is planned as topics and themes which follow the national guidelines for the subject and have cross-curricular links to art, music and literature. A portfolio of pupils' work has been compiled to illustrate the work in geography and the co-ordinator has worked with staff to consider the suitability of books and resources to support teaching and learning in geography.
- 124 The co-ordinator has identified the need for more visits and visitors to enrich the pupils geographical knowledge. Monitoring activities are also planned to check on pupil progress and attainment.

· **History**

- 125 No lessons in history were observed during the inspection. Judgements about the quality of work in this subject are, therefore, based on scrutiny of pupils' work and evidence gained from teachers' plans and documentation. Pupils are making satisfactory progress in history. They are developing skills in using reference materials to learn about the past and to record changes in their local area.
- 126 At the time of the last inspection some weaknesses were identified which the school has addressed through an audit of classroom practice and a focus on the national guidelines for teaching and learning in history.
- 127 The school has made close and useful links with the local museum service and is acting as a pilot for liaison and the development of teaching materials. Much of the work is intended to focus on elements of local history, as for example, a Year 2 project based on pre and post-war Nuneaton and study units based on the life and work of local celebrities and benefactors.
- 128 A good feature of the school's proposals for developing history in the school is the link made with a local historian and visits to the town Heritage Centre that enable pupils to learn from the artefacts and source materials of the Victorian era.
- 129 The policy and scheme of work now developed in the school has the potential to ensure that all pupils receive an appropriate curriculum in history.

Information Technology

130 Attainment in information technology (IT) matches the standards expected nationally at the end of Key Stage 1 in two out of the three aspects of the Programmes of Study. The school does not currently have appropriate software or hardware to enable pupils to become proficient in controlling and modelling. The roamer, which was used at the time of the last inspection, does not function and no other resources are provided to address this need.

131 However, pupils are making satisfactory progress in using equipment to communicate and handle information through using the recently developed community resource of Hatters Space. Pupils are able to use computer, keyboard and mouse. They are able to explore the use of computer systems and learn basic skills.

132 Within the classroom, pupils are able to use computers for word processing and for activities and support in other areas of the curriculum such as mathematics and history. However, these facilities are not used consistently well as many of the classroom computers are old and one of the new computers was out of action at the time of the inspection.

133 A number of teachers are not yet confident in teaching information technology but the school has an experienced and enthusiastic classroom assistant who provides much of the direct teaching and support. The lesson observed was good. Learning outcomes and activities are clearly shared with pupils. Pupils are used effectively to demonstrate to others. Good opportunities are provided for reinforcement and consolidation of learning.

134 Pupils' attitudes towards information technology are very positive. Pupils are clearly excited about using the new facilities at the community centre. They treat the equipment with care and enjoy exploring its capabilities. Pupils generally work effectively together when sharing a computer and co-operate well.

135 The school is at the threshold of significant improvement in information technology. The community facility provides pupils with excellent opportunities to use computers independently and the headteacher, as IT co-ordinator, has ensured that appropriate software has been installed. The school is now awaiting the national grant that is being allocated to all schools to fund the planned upgrading of classroom computers to enable delivery of the full curriculum. However, the school should consider, as a matter of urgency, the need to acquire control equipment appropriate for an infant school.

Music

136 Pupils make satisfactory progress in music. The school has addressed issues raised in the last inspection report by using the skills of a number of specialist staff.

137 Pupils sing well. A specialist teacher has a weekly session with Year 2 pupils to develop singing skills. This was the only Key Stage 1 music lesson observed during the period of the inspection. The teaching observed was good, providing a structured approach to develop pupils' confidence. There are high expectations of behaviour.

138 Pupils sing a variety of songs from memory using appropriate pitch, dynamics and tempo. Older pupils can sing simple two-part songs. Most pupils can follow simple rhythm patterns by clapping and using voices. The singing in assemblies is good, particularly on those days where there is piano accompaniment. Pupils have opportunities to perform to parents and in special events such as the civic carol service.

139 Pupils cover other aspects of the music curriculum in lessons taught by a specialist teacher from the county service. None of these lessons were observed but the music co-ordinator's meticulous planning indicates that pupils use a variety of untuned percussion instruments to create rhythms and follow simple tunes and are given opportunities to compose and to evaluate their work.

140 Pupils have planned opportunities in assemblies to listen to the work of famous composers and

music from other cultures as well as our own. Pupils listen attentively and behave well on these occasions as well as in music lessons. They are enthusiastic when performing.

141 The subject co-ordinator organises the music curriculum effectively. She has good liaison with the specialist teachers to ensure appropriate coverage and delivery of the Programmes of Study and keeps useful records.

• **Physical Education**

142 Three lessons were observed: two gymnastics and one games lesson. On the evidence from the lessons and from teachers' records, progress in physical education is satisfactory. Standards and quality of teaching have been maintained since the last inspection.

143 By the time they leave the school, pupils have sufficient skill to throw, catch and control a ball. In playing small games they have good awareness of space and learn well how to dodge opponents. In gymnastics, using the floor and apparatus, they demonstrate sound skill in performing the basic actions of travelling and transferring weight on to different body parts. The progress in gymnastics could be better and is slowed down by the time taken to set up the large apparatus. Pupils with special educational needs are making satisfactory progress in all aspects of physical education.

144 Pupils' attitudes to physical education are positive. All pupils, including those with special needs, enjoy all activities. Most have a good awareness of the need for safe practice in games and gymnastics. They behave well and listen to instructions. There are a few pupils whose behaviour is challenging but these are well managed by teachers.

145 Teaching is mainly satisfactory. Lessons are well planned. Sufficient time is given at the beginning of a lesson to warm up. Teachers explain carefully what they require pupils to do. A good balance is achieved between demonstration and practice. Some teachers are more effective than others at demonstrating how particular actions are to be performed. Classroom assistants are not well deployed in assisting pupils who find the tasks too difficult.

146 There is good progression in the programme of work. Extra-curricular provision in gymnastics and ball skills enhances the curriculum; events such as sports day introduce pupils to competitive sport.

147 The well-qualified co-ordinator supports colleagues well and has monitored teaching. The accommodation and resources for the subject are good and learning resources are stored well and are accessible for pupils to fetch for themselves.

• **Religious Education**

148 Pupils make satisfactory progress in religious education and by end of the key stage, attainment is in line with expectations set out in the locally agreed religious education syllabus. This is similar to the outcomes from the last inspection report.

149 Pupils demonstrate satisfactory knowledge of religious ceremonies and celebrations, within the Christian faith and in other world religions. They understand and value significant events for individuals and communities. As a Church of England voluntary controlled school, they develop good knowledge of the local church and Christian festivals. Pupils have appropriate knowledge of Bible stories. Many pupils demonstrate good understanding of the moral and social implications arising from these stories and other issues.

150 Pupils' attitudes are good and pupils are interested and well motivated. In one lesson where groups were engaged in role-play about looking after each other, pupils co-operated very well with each other and showed good initiative in deciding what their scene should be. They were attentive when watching each other's role-play and showed good understanding of the issues raised.

151 Only two lessons were observed during the inspection and there is little recorded work of

pupils. Teaching is at least satisfactory and sometimes good. Lessons are well structured and the teachers provide good opportunities for discussion. In one lesson the teacher effectively linked the Bible story and message to pupils' practical everyday situations.

152 The co-ordinator plans the curriculum effectively to ensure coverage of the religious education syllabus and progression through the key stage. This is supported by an appropriate range of resources and visits. The local vicar and chaplain are closely involved in promoting pupils' knowledge and understanding of the Christian faith, festivals and ceremonies. Assemblies and collective acts of worship make a significant contribution to religious education.

· **PART C: INSPECTION DATA**

· **SUMMARY OF INSPECTION EVIDENCE**

153 The school was inspected over a four day period by a team of four inspectors who spent the equivalent of twelve inspection days in the school.

During the inspection the team:

- XXV. Observed 46 lessons or parts of lessons totalling 29 hours;
- XXVI. Spent a total of eight hours interviewing governors, teachers, other staff and adult helpers in the school;
- XXVII. Held informal discussions with pupils;
- XXVIII. Spent approximately 6 hours examining pupils' workbooks and folders;
- XXIX. Observed pupils in the playground, in assemblies and at lunchtimes;
- XXX. Looked at a range of school documents including policies, schemes of work, the school development plan, teachers plans and records, financial information, reports to parents and individual education plans for pupils with special educational needs;
- XXXI. Analysed 24 responses, 14.5% of those issued, to the pre-inspection questionnaire for parents;
- XXXII. Noted the views of the 16 parents who attended the meeting prior to the inspection.

. **Pupil data**

	Number of pupils on roll (full-time equivalent)	Number of pupils with statements of SEN	Number of pupils on school's register of SEN	Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals
YR – Y2	166	1	46	37
Nursery Unit/School	26	0	0	0

. **Teachers and classes**

. **Qualified teachers (YR – Y2)**

Total number of qualified teachers (full-time equivalent):	7
Number of pupils per qualified teacher:	24

. **Education support staff (YR – Y2)**

Total number of education support staff:	10
Total aggregate hours worked each week:	170

. **Qualified teachers (Nursery unit)**

Total number of qualified teachers (full-time equivalent):	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher:	26

. **Education support staff (Nursery unit)**

Total number of education support staff:	1
Total aggregate hours worked each week:	32.5

Average class size:	26
---------------------	----

Financial data

Financial year:	1998/99
	£
Total Income	275973
Total Expenditure	293910
Expenditure per pupil	1814.26
Balance brought forward from previous year	30260
Balance carried forward to next year	12323

PARENTAL SURVEY

Number of questionnaires sent out: 166
Number of questionnaires returned: 24

Responses (percentage of answers in each category):

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither	Disagree	Strongly disagree
I feel the school encourages parents to play an active part in the life of the school	67	29	0	4	0
I would find it easy to approach the school with questions or problems to do with my child(ren)	58	42	0	0	0
The school handles complaints from parents well	45	36	14	5	0
The school gives me a clear understanding of what is taught	58	42	0	0	0
The school keeps me well informed about my child(ren)'s progress	62	37	0	0	0
The school enables my child(ren) to achieve a good standard of work	70	30	0	0	0
The school encourages children to get involved in more than just their daily lessons	75	25	0	0	0
I am satisfied with the work that my child(ren) is/are expected to do at home	43	52	4	0	0
The school's values and attitudes have a positive effect on my child(ren)	67	29	4	0	0
The school achieves high standards of good behaviour	57	43	0	0	0
My child(ren) like(s) school	79	17	0	4	0

Other issues raised by parents

XXXIII. Parents appreciate the Christian values promoted by the school.

XXXIV. The school is a popular choice for parents, a significant number have chosen the school specifically or have moved their child from another school.

Summary of responses

Parents are pleased with the quality of information provided by the school. They note improvement in leadership and communication since the last inspection and value the school for the way in which it builds children's confidence and self esteem.